against the Volunteer Army while at the same time irreconcilably opposed to the Communist government of Russia.

In the summer of 1918, it seemed for a brief period that a free and democratic Russia might emerge out of the chaos of civil war. This hope had been kindled in democratic circles by the movement of the Czech legion, a military outfit organized before the March revolution by the Tsarist government through enrollment of volunteers among Austrian war prisoners. The organization was planned as a liberation army to support the Czechs in a revolt against Austrian rule. Politically, it was under the control of the Czech National Council headed by Masaryk, with headquarters in Paris. Before the November coup, the legion was transformed into an army corps and billeted in the Ukraine. After the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the Czech National Council decided to evacuate it from Russia to France by sea, via Vladivostok. The corps had some forty thousand men when it started its march eastward but increased to perhaps sixty thousand by enrollment of volunteers, mainly also Czech war prisoners. It proceeded with its munitions and other equipment in about a hundred trains, fanning out over the railroads in eastern Russia.

In May, the German Military Command demanded that the People's Commissars stop the Czechs, and Trotsky, People's Commissar for Military Affairs, ordered them to surrender their arms. The Czechs agreed on condition that each train would keep 150 rifles and a few machine guns for self-defense and that the echelons would be permitted to proceed to the Pacific coast. Then Trotsky ordered Russian troops to stop the Czech trains and shoot every armed Czech on sight. The legion had no choice but to fight its way. By that time, a few Czech echelons had reached Vladivostok; others were still on the Volga, while the bulk of the corps was scattered between the Urals and the Pacific coast—nearly twice the distance from New York to San Francisco.

In clashes between the Czechs and the Reds, the Czechs invariably had the upper hand. And as soon as they disarmed a Red garrison, the local population would overthrow the Communist-dominated Soviet and elect a new government. On June 21, the Czechs took Samara on the Volga after a fierce fight with the Communist garrison, and the civilian power in the city was taken over by the Committee of the Constituent Assembly, dominated by the S-R. In a few weeks the Samara government raised an army of thirty thousand men.

The Allied governments were impressed by the success of the anti-Communist popular movement. It seemed to open new perspectives: could the Allies restore the former Russian front, with the Volga as its base?

Like the eastbound march of the Czechs, the new project was not